

Message Text

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46

ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 USIA-12 /023 W

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R 111249Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6414

UNCLAS BEIRUT 1673

E.O 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC LE

SUBJECT: FY-74 IV NOMINATION OF ALTERNATE CANDIDATE, MOHAMMAD
MACHNOUK

REF: BEIRUT 6767, JUNE 8, 1973

STATE 115009, JUNE 14, 1973 AND A-8585 OF OCT 12, 1973

POST WISHES NOMINATE MR. MOHAMMAD A. MACHNOUK AS
ALTERNATE FOR RAMEZ KHAZEN WHO WILL BE UNABLE TO
TRAVEL IN FY-74.

CATEGORY: OBSERVATION AND CONSULTATION. 30 DAYS AT
\$35 PER DIEM.

1. MR. MOHAMMAD A. KACHNOUK

2. DIRECTOR NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION,
1967-73: COEDITOR, RADIO NEWSREEL, RADIO LEBANON,
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION.
1962-73: EDITOR ARABIC DAILY "BEIRUT AL MASSA."

3. BORN ON OCTOBER 1941, BEIRUT, LEBANON.
LEBANESE.

4. NO PREVIOUS VISIT TO US.
ALL ARAB COUNTRIES, MOST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES,
SOUTH ASIA, AND EAST GERMANY AT GDR INVITATION, 1970.

5. NONE.

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6. NONE. NOMINEE IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH.

7. NAME CHECK SUBMITTED.

8. MR. MACHNOUK IS ONE OF A HANDFUL TRUE PROFESSIONALS AT LEBANESE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION. HIS PROFESSIONALISM, YOUTH AND BACKGROUND AS A SUNNI MUSLIM MAKE HIM AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT MEMBER OF GOVERNMENTAL INFORMATION STRUCTURE.

IN HIS CAPACITY AS DIRECTOR, NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY (NNA), A POST TO WHICH HE WAS RECENTLY PROMOTED, MR. MACHNOUK HAS GREAT INFLUENCE ON GOVERNMENTAL POLICY WITH REGARD TO NEWS AND COMMENT ON RADIO AND TELEVISION. FROM 1967 TO 1973, HE DEVELOPED AND COEDITED RADIO LEBANON'S PRIME-TIME DAILY "RADIO NEWSREEL" PROGRAM OF CORRESPONDENTS' REPORTS AND COMMENTARY, AND, SINCE HIS APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR OF NNA HE HAS MAINTAINED HIS INTEREST IN THIS PROGRAM. THE MISSION HAS EXCELLENT CLOSE RELATIONS WITH NOMINEE. HE HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN ACHIEVING EXREMELY HIGH LEVEL USAGE OF USIA MATERIALS BOTH ON "RADIO NEWSREEL" AND IN DAILY SPECIAL NEWS BULLETIN CIRCULATED TO HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

MR. MACHNOUK BELIEVES THE US TO BE A LEADER IN NUMEROUS FIELDS, AMONG THEM INFORMATION, BUT HAS NEVER SEEN FOR HIMSELF. A VISIT TO US WOULD CONFIRM HIS ALREADY POSITIVE BUT SECOND HAND IMAGE OF US. THIS, IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS POSITION AS A YOUNG MAN ON WAY UP, WOULD PROVE OF REAL BENEFIT TO OBJECTIVES OF THE POST.

9. OBJECTIVE B-3: KEY EDITORIAL WRITERS AND COLUMNISTS.

10. MAY 15, 1974 - ONE MONTH.
HOUGHTON

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